

whatever influence he has to induce others to vote as he thinks right. I do not think that a man should be dismissed for having exercised his powers of persuasion over his fellow citizens. The only ground for dismissal should be dereliction of office.

Sir WILLIAM MULLOCK. I would not like by my silence to be considered as admitting that I ever dismissed any one under such circumstances as those to which my hon. friend has referred. If he will bring any case of dismissal to my attention, he will find that the circumstances differ materially from what he thinks they were.

Mr. FOWLER. I never knew the hon. gentleman yet to admit anything, but he must remember that during the last four years I have frequently brought to his attention dismissals of postmasters for no other reason than the recommendation of the person who had control of the patronage.

Sir WILLIAM MULLOCK. The other day I promised my hon. friend from Beauharnois an explanation why a certain messenger was getting \$720. The explanation is that some officers in that class have accepted the grade system, which was inaugurated three years ago. Under that system a man is graded at so much a day and may ultimately reach the yearly amount of \$725.

Mr. BERGERON. Where is the line of demarcation between the two classes when the appointments are made?

Sir WILLIAM MULLOCK. The messengers may be appointed purely messengers or on the grade system. For example, a porter or packer gets \$700 a year. To-day, if we were to appoint a porter or packer, we could, if we chose, appoint him as a grade officer, on a per diem basis. That system has been very generally adopted with letter-carriers and those who work around post offices. They enter at \$1.25 per day, rising, in a few months, to \$1.50 a day and so on until, after about four years service, they reach a maximum of \$2.25 per day. In addition, they are entitled to a bonus of \$20 a year for good conduct. I think that my hon. friend will find that these figures aggregate \$724.25. The officer he speaks of was in that class, at a maximum of \$724.25, and his name was A. Smith.

Mr. BERGERON. And they are appointed permanently?

Sir WILLIAM MULLOCK. Yes, the difference is in the mode of payment.

Mr. BERGERON. Who decides how they shall be appointed?

Sir WILLIAM MULLOCK. When the law came into effect, every man had the privilege of electing to continue under the old

law or come under the new. The new appointments are made under the grade system.

Mr. BERGERON. I thank the Postmaster General for this information. Coming back to the matter we were speaking of a few moments ago, I wish to refer to a case that came under my own observation. The Postmaster at Beauharnois in 1896 was Mr. Alexis Doutré. He was a very good officer, and nothing was ever said against the way he kept the post office. Before his appointment he had been a strong partisan, but, while postmaster he did nothing that should have excited the anger of those in the locality who did not share his political opinions. When my hon. friend (Sir Wm. Mulock) took hold of the department, Mr. Doutré was dismissed summarily, without investigation granted, though I asked for it. An officer of the department came and demanded his keys. The dismissal caused Mr. Doutré great inconvenience. He had rented a house for which he was personally responsible. The gentleman who replaced him in office, a political friend of hon. gentlemen opposite, has performed his duties well. But, I am sorry to say, he is very sick to-day, and I believe, cannot hold his position very long. I think it would be a graceful and generous thing for the Postmaster General, if the position becomes vacant, to reappoint Mr. Doutré to the position he formerly held. He has not recovered financially from the disadvantages to which he was put by his sudden dismissal. It was unexpected; it was a contingency he had not provided for. If he were reappointed, it would only be an act of justice, and it would do the party of the hon. member far more good than it would do me. It would be a wise move for the further reason that, when the time comes to fill the office, the Postmaster General will find many demands, but he will find few applicants who would be acceptable to himself if he knew the cases well. I might say that I have always looked at these matters differently from the Postmaster General. Even in the old days, during the time when I supported a government in this House, there were many postmasters in Beauharnois opposed to me. Yet, I never asked for the dismissal of any of them, and some of them are there still and they worked against me. I do not complain of that, because their official duties are properly performed. But I use this argument as a further ground for asking that, if the present postmaster of Beauharnois does not hold his office, the Postmaster General will re-appoint the man who was dismissed—as he will find on looking into the matter—without any good reason.

Sir WILLIAM MULLOCK. My hon. friend (Mr. Bergeron) has certainly a very winning way of appealing to one. I can only say that if it becomes necessary to appoint a postmaster at Beauharnois, what the hon.